



29 April 2026

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[fyi-request-34263](https://www.fyi.govt.nz/requests/34263)

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Tēnā koe P Peach

OIA request 2526-1035 - Request for information about NAATI credential compliance and subcontracting practices in DIA translation and interpreting services

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 27 March 2026.

You requested –

SECTION A: SUBCONTRACTING ARRANGEMENTS

- 1. Whether DIA's Translation Service or any external translation or interpreting providers contracted to DIA are permitted to subcontract assignments to third parties, including overseas-based agencies or individual contractors located outside New Zealand.*
- 2. Any conditions or restrictions in DIA's contracts with translation or interpreting providers regarding the use of subcontractors, including any requirements that subcontractors be based in New Zealand or hold an appropriate New Zealand work visa.*
- 3. Whether DIA requires providers to disclose the identity, location, or credentials of individual translators or interpreters — including subcontractors — who carry out assignments on DIA's behalf.*
- 4. Whether DIA has any knowledge of, or has sought information about, assignments being routed to interpreters or translators located outside New Zealand.*
- 5. Any instances where DIA became aware that an assignment was conducted by a person located outside New Zealand or by an uncredentialed subcontractor, and any action taken as a result.*

SECTION B: NAATI CREDENTIAL COMPLIANCE

- 6. What mechanism, if any, DIA uses to verify that individual translators and interpreters carrying out assignments on its behalf — including those engaged through subcontracting arrangements — hold a valid NAATI credential or Working Towards NAATI (WTN) status.*

7. *Whether DIA requires its translation or interpreting providers to maintain and supply a current register of credentialed practitioners working under DIA contracts, and if so whether DIA has received and reviewed such registers.*
8. *Any audits, spot checks, or compliance reviews conducted by DIA on its translation or interpreting providers since 1 July 2024 to verify NAATI credential compliance, including the methodology and findings of any such reviews.*
9. *Any instances since 1 July 2024 where a provider was found to have used a translator or interpreter who did not hold the required NAATI credential or Working Towards NAATI (WTN) status, and any consequences or remedial action taken.*
10. *Any complaints received by DIA since 1 July 2024 from staff, clients, or members of the public regarding the qualifications or conduct of a translator or interpreter engaged through DIA's services.*

SECTION C: INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATOR PAY VISIBILITY

11. *Whether DIA has any information about the rates or fees paid by its external providers to individual translators or interpreters for assignments conducted on DIA's behalf.*
12. *Whether DIA has ever sought, as part of contract negotiations, tendering processes, or performance reviews, any information about the pay or working conditions of translators or interpreters engaged through its provider contracts.*
13. *Any internal policies, briefings, risk assessments, or correspondence within DIA regarding the fair remuneration or employment conditions of translators and interpreters working under its contracts, including any concerns raised about the margin between rates paid to providers and rates passed on to practitioners.*

Whether DIA's tendering or procurement criteria for translation and interpreting services include any consideration of whether providers pay practitioners at or above a minimum rate, living wage, or industry standard.

In response to your request I can provide you with the following information.

SECTION A: SUBCONTRACTING ARRANGEMENTS

Question one

The Department's Translation Service (TTS) works with translators based in New Zealand and abroad. Those translators are not permitted to subcontract translation work assigned to them.

The Department utilises the Language Assistance Services (LAS) panel of providers for interpreting services, specifically Connecting Now and Interpreting New Zealand. This is made available to us through the syndicated contracts titled "Open Syndicated Panel Agreement for Face-to-Face Interpreting Services" and "Open Syndicated Panel Agreement for Telephone and Video Interpreting Services". These open syndicated contracts (OSCs) operate as national models that enable agencies to access interpreting services efficiently and effectively across New Zealand. As a customer, DIA does not monitor LAS compliance for the interpreting services and does not hold the details requested. Therefore, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate them, cannot be found.

Question two

I refer to my response to question one. As TTS does not allow translators to subcontract, there are no other applicable requirements for subcontractors.

The Department does not manage the OSCs relating to interpreting services. I recommend that you contact the Ministry of Ethnic Communities if you would like more information about the use of sub-contractors, if any.

Question three

For translators, the details relating to identity, location or credentials are collected during the induction process when a translator is first engaged by TTS.

The Department does not require interpreting providers to disclose details relating to identity, location or credentials of interpreters. This is covered by the OSCs with specified providers.

Question four

The majority of TTS' translation work is carried out by translators based in New Zealand. However, translation work is routinely commissioned to translators located outside New Zealand.

The location of interpreters employed through the OSCs is managed by the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE). Therefore, the Department does not hold this information. I refuse this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act.

Question five

I have interpreted this question as applying only to TTS, as you have not referred to interpreters.

Where TTS' work is commissioned to translators located outside New Zealand, TTS does not require translators to comply with National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). Therefore, it isn't necessary for TTS to take any follow up action.

SECTION B: NAATI CREDENTIAL COMPLIANCE

Question six

As advised above, TTS' translators are not required to comply with NAATI. Where this certification is claimed as part of a translator's application, NAATI credentials have been verified via the online directory of NAATI translators. The directory can be found at <https://directory.naati.com.au/>.

For interpreters, MBIE manages NAATI credentials under the OSCs. Therefore, the Department does not use any mechanism to verify NAATI compliance. For further information please contact MBIE.

Question seven

The Department does not require its translation or interpreting service providers to maintain or provide the Department with a register of credentialled practitioners. As a result, the Department has not received or reviewed any such registers.

Question eight

I can advise that NAATI credentialling is not a requirement for translators, therefore, the Department has not undertaken any audits, spot checks, or compliance reviews since 1 July 2024 to verify NAATI credential compliance.

Similarly, no such work has occurred in respect of the Department's use of Connecting Now and Interpreting New Zealand.

Question nine

I can advise that no remedial action has been taken against translators without NAATI credentials.

For interpreters, the OSCs are managed by MBIE and if you require further information we recommend that you contact them directly.

Question ten

The Department has not received any complaints since 1 July 2024 from staff, clients or members of the public regarding the qualifications or conduct of a translator or LAS panel interpreter engaged by the Department.

SECTION C: INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATOR PAY VISIBILITY

For questions 11 to 14, I do not hold the requested information for interpreting services and I refuse these questions under section 18(e). I recommend that you contact MBIE and MEC for information about interpreting services used by the Department through the OSCs. However, we specifically reply to these questions for TTS.

Question eleven

Most translation work is carried out by individuals contracted directly to TTS. TTS does not have oversight or information on the pay rates offered by external Language Service Providers (LSPs) to the translators they work with.

Question twelve

TTS has not sought information of the internal processes of LSPs that have been engaged to provide translation services. This includes pay and working conditions.

Question Thirteen

The Department does not hold any internal policies, briefings, risk assessments, or correspondence relating to the fair remuneration or employment conditions of translators working for TTS, including any concerns about the margin between rates paid to providers and rates passed on to individual practitioners. Therefore, I refuse this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act.

Question fourteen

The pay rates for translation services offered by TTS take into account the minimum rates, living wage and industry standards for translation services.

Proactive Release

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, the Department has decided to proactively release a copy of this response on the DIA website. All requestor data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release. The released response will be made available here: <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2>.

Access to the Ombudsman

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Julia Taylor

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Regulatory and Identity Services